

Central Enteric Reference Laboratory,
Central Public Health Laboratory,
Solindale Avenue,
London N.W.9.

26th September, 1955

Dear Josh,

I'm sorry that I appeared so obtuse in my reply to your last letter, but the fact is that I had not connected my peculiar result in one of the three way crosses with the F- tester stocks. Your impression is, in the main, correct. The facts are as follows.

One of the last experiments I did was to do a triple cross between W 1177 , W 2825 (= W 1875 C_F^R), AND W 2284. Certain anomalies were found amongst the prototrophs which could be explained by reversion of W 2284 to F + , this was indicated by the heavy background growth present in the control cross W 1177 x W 2284. On the other hand reversion at the C_F locus in W 2825 would also explain the results and this too I think had happened. W 1177 was perfectly alright in other control crosses and I did not regard W 2284 as a standard F - tester, hence my previous reply. W 2284 was I think produced by passage through motility medium by either Dave Skaar or Tom Nelson but I know no more about it. As I left the lab a couple of days after reading the results I was unable to check on the cause.

Helen is quite mystified by the absence of Weeds strains from both stab and lyophil, as she is as certain as one can be at this distance that they should be there. I can only suggest that somebody has used them and misplaced them at some date after she had put them away. Anyway she will send copies of the cultures when she is able to get down to finding out if they are still viable (I see no reason why they should die). As I said in my last letter the only data she has, other than her experimental results which ^{you} will have had in reports, is the fact that they are stated to be Coli B and that one is supposed to be a copper 'mutant'. She has no other information as to their history or radiation resistance, etc.

I'm having medium trouble at present. EMS does not seem to be working , i.e won't support recombinants, although the eosin is some of

the stock you gave to Clive. I'm now going to try DO instead, since I don't really need the indicator function of EMS. Other than that just the usual enteric routine, we are rather busy with para B outbreaks which mostly seem to be due to Chinese frozen egg albumen - one outbreak over 400 - maybe its a Red plot. It certainly is giving the Ministry officials a headache.

Have just had a galaxy of Enterologists at the labs - Kauffman, Ewing, Hormaeche, and Lourie as part of a WHO commission on Shigella and coli - lots of fatuous taxonomic arguments I gather.

Give our best wishes to Esther,

Aleck